



# Storm and Severe Weather Clean-up

The Next Three Seconds Protects Your Life, Your Loved Ones, Your Livelihood®

## The N3L3 philosophy:

our approach to protecting workers from fatal and life-changing events.

*Eastern Alliance is here to help. To learn more about Eastern's N3L3 program and access other safety resources, sign in and visit the Safety Tools on [www.easternalliance.com](http://www.easternalliance.com), or contact your Risk Management Consultant for assistance*

**1.855.533.3444**

When severe weather strikes your business and you are faced with clean-up, you are likely to perform non-routine tasks. At Eastern Alliance, we have seen that non-routine tasks can result in fatal and life-changing injuries. In order to help protect you and your employees, we have compiled a list of exposures for you to address during the clean-up process.

**Risk Transfer** – Recognize that clean-up is non-routine and likely falls outside of your scope of operations. The best way to protect your employees is to transfer the clean-up process to a subcontractor who specializes in storm clean-up and recovery. This is often the safest and most efficient option for your business.

If you choose to complete the clean-up work in-house, here are some tips for your organization and for those who will be involved in the clean-up operations:

**Electricity** – Assume all power lines are live unless you know otherwise. Keep at least 10 feet away from them. Also keep your distance from frayed wires or sparks.

**Walking** – Do not walk into flooded areas. These areas may contain debris, have uneven depths or hidden electrical lines. Flooded waters may also contain biological contaminants from sewer over flows and chemical spills.

**Driving** – Flooded roadways create many hazards. To remain safe and in control, do not cross flooded roads. Six inches of water is enough to make some cars stall. Twelve inches of water is enough to float a vehicle and two feet of moving water is enough to carry a vehicle in the current. There may also be debris hidden in the waters.

**Gas Leaks** – Stay aware and alert to any potential gas leaks. If you suspect damage to the gas line or appliances, leave the area and have an authorized person turn off the gas supply.

**Personal Protective Equipment** – Wear proper clothing- including boots, leather or chemical-resistant gloves, dust masks, etc. that are appropriate for the hazards at hand. Use good hygiene practices to protect yourself from potential chemical or biological hazards that may be present. See OSHA's Disaster Personal Protective Equipment Matrix <https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3898.pdf>

**Sharp Objects** – Sharp objects such as nails and broken glass may be present, but difficult to see. Use leather or protective gloves to protect your hands and reinforced construction boots to prevent foot injuries when working in debris piles. Visibly inspect materials before handling to identify safe places to grab so that you do not cut yourself.

**Tool Safety** – Power equipment is often used during clean-up operations. Everyone must receive training and demonstrate competence in order to operate generators, chainsaws, or other power tools. Discuss this with your supervisor if you feel you are not qualified to use any of this equipment.

Do not enter damaged structures. Follow the directions of emergency personnel indicating when re-entry is safe.

For more information regarding disaster clean-up, please visit this website: <https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/cleanup/index.html>

This information is proprietary and is intended to assist you in your safety efforts. It must not be assumed that every unsafe condition or procedure has been covered in this document, nor that every possible loss potential, and legal violation has been identified herein. This document is not a substitute for the establishment of risk management programs by your management.